

## **Recognition of International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS), August 2004**

### Establishing Organic Production and Processing Sub-Program

On December 6, 2002 [IOAS](#) expressed to NIST, in a letter, their intent to apply for NIST recognition under the National Voluntary Conformity Assessment System Evaluation (NVCASE) program for Organic Production and Processing. The purpose of their request was to provide confidence in their quality of work and provide assurance that IOAS is subject to government oversight.

After reviewing IOAS application, NIST decided to proceed with establishing a NVCASE sub-program for Organic Production and Processing. In accordance with NVCASE regulations, NIST published a notice in the Federal Register to invite all interested parties to a workshop held on May 9, 2003. The purpose of this workshop was to consult the public and develop criteria for the sub program. The workshop was attended by USDA, ANSI, IOAS, Organic Trade Association, and other Organic Agriculture experts. Most of the questions asked during this workshop were clarifications about the IOAS program. No body objected to establishing the sub program. On November 4, 2003 NIST published another notice in the Federal Register to announce the establishment of the sub program for Organic Production and Process and invited applications from all interested accreditors.

### NIST Evaluation and Recognition of IOAS

On February 6, 2004 IOAS applied for NIST recognition under its NVCASE program in the field of Organic Production and Processing against following criteria and scopes.

Criteria: ISO/IEC Guide 61 and NIST Handbook NISTIR 6440:2002 ED  
Recognition Scope: (A) International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements ([IFOAM](#)) Norms  
(B) ISO/IEC Guide 65

As a part of our evaluation NIST conducted an on-site assessment of IOAS quality systems against ISO/IEC Guide 61 checklist. NIST prepared the checklist based ISO/IEC Guide 61 and asked IOAS to provide cross references to each clause and provide supporting documents. IOAS returned the completed checklist along with all supporting documents recorded on a CD. NIST reviewed the IOAS documents against above criteria and prepared an agenda for on-site assessment.

On May 25-26, 2004 NIST conducted an on-site assessment at IOAS's office in Jamestown, North Dakota. During the 2-day period NIST reviewed IOAS's policies, procedures, forms, documents, and records against the checklist. On March 29-31, 2004 NIST witnessed an IOAS audit conducted by its auditor at Washington State Department of Agriculture. A technical expert/assessor accompanied NIST personnel during the on-site audit as well as the witness audit. After IOAS addressed the non-compliances satisfactorily, NIST convened an Evaluation Panel meeting on August 26, 2004 to render a decision on IOAS recognition. After reviewing

the results of the on-site assessment and the witness audit, the Evaluation Panel unanimously approved NIST recognition of IOAS. The terms of IOAS recognition are as follows:

Name of the Recognized Accreditor: International Organic Accreditation Service  
Address of the Accreditor: 118-1/2, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue South, Suite 15, Jamestown, ND 58401  
Authorized Representative: Ken Commins, Executive Director

Date of Recognition: August 26, 2004  
Valid through: August 25, 2006

Type of Action: Initial Recognition

General Criteria for Recognition: ISO/IEC Guide 61 and NVCASE Program Handbook,  
NISTIR 6440:2002 ED

Specific Scope of Recognition: 1. International Federation of Organic Agriculture  
Movements (IFOAM) Norms  
2. ISO/IEC Guide 65

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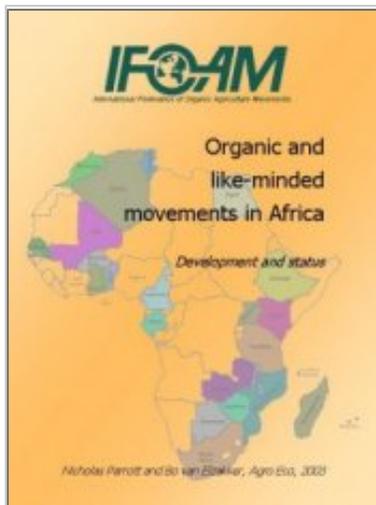
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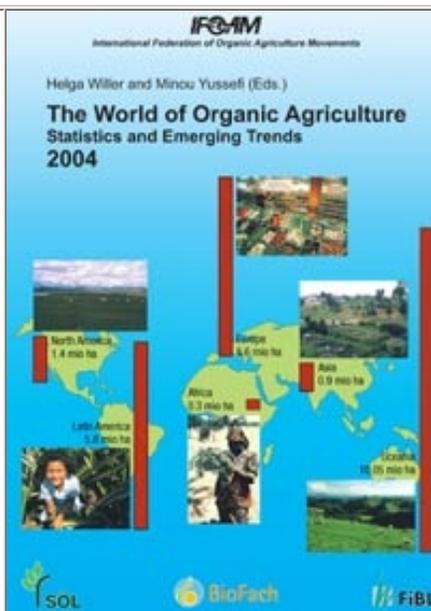
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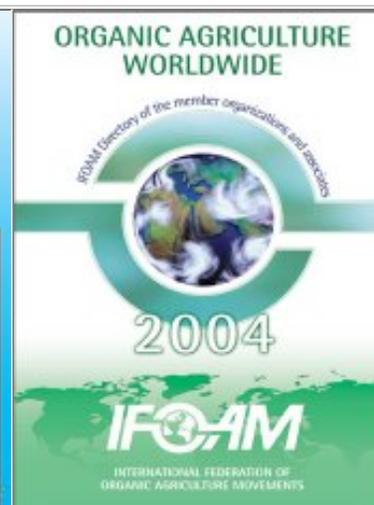
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